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ABSTRACT

This final report of the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (Utah) describes the Center's activities in support of services to children and youth with disabilities during the 2-year federal grant period (1991-1993). It notes accomplishment of its mandate and mission to strengthen state education agency (SEA) capacities by providing needs-driven technical assistance to the area's 11 SEAs and through them to the local education agencies. A total of 188 technical assistance activities were provided via consultations, workshops and meetings, development and dissemination of products, and information searches. Areas in which technical assistance was provided include (in quantitative order): Individualized Education Programs, special populations, SEA management, transition, school reform, personnel development, technology, SEA monitoring, parents, least restrictive environment, and procedural safeguards. Specific activities in each area are detailed as well as evidence of activity impact. Also described are requests for information and products developed by the Center during the grant period. (DB)

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FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

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June 1, 1991-May 31, 1993

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Office of Special Education Programs

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PR/Award Number H028A10004

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MPRRC FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the grant period June 1, 1991 through May 21, 1993, the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (RRC #5) fulfilled its mandate and mission to strengthen SEA capacity to service disabled infants, toddlers, children, youth, and their families by providing needs-driven technical assistance to its eleven SEAs, and through them to LEAs.

In all, 188 technical assistance activities were negotiated with the Region, of which (87%) were completed. Via this direct technical assistance, the following contacts were made:

TO		VIA		REGARDING	
Teachers	5,863	Consultation	2,316	IEPs	2,956
LEAs	3,941	Workshop/Mtgs/Confs	427	Special Populations	2,582
SEAs	2,565	Products	50	SEA Management	2,002
Parents	1,245	Information Searches	40	Transition	1,779
Other	1,945			School Reform	1,427
				CSPD	1,294
				Technology	804
				SEA Monitoring	621
				Parents	576
				LRE	527
				Procedural Safeguards	454
				Personnel Development	314
				Early Childhood	136
				Program Evaluation	69
				Related Services	22

In addition, the RRC responded to 277 information requests, from the following:

SEAs	156
Other RRCs	85
Parents	9
Other TA Projects	12
IHE	8
LEAs	5
OSEP	2

A major goal of the MPRRC has always been that its technical assistance ultimately improves the quality of services delivered to disabled children and their families; that, as a result of the Center's technical assistance, the lives of people with special needs are improved. We hope that students will have learned more and better than would have been the case without our technical assistance; that parents will be more knowledgeable, and have better parenting and advocacy skills as they work with and in behalf of special needs children.

To document our success at accomplishing this goal, we at the MPRRC have evaluated--in some instances researched--the impact of our services. The findings of the impact of selected technical assistance activities are reported herein. Relative to assessing impact, we have had to be very selective, and make hard decisions, about where and how to spend our limited resources. Theoretically, it is possible to measure the impact of any form of intervention. A compelling problem arises, however, when one has to decide whether to expend limited resources on services or the evaluation of those services. Caught on the horns of this dilemma, and in the absence of grant-based directives or guidelines, we have made those difficult decisions, the results of which are reflected in this report.

Though, in retrospect, we can see clearly what could and should have been done to improve our work of the past two years, we are generally satisfied with what we have done, and believe that that sense of satisfaction can be validated both in terms of hard data and the satisfaction of our clients. We trust that this report will reflect that.

Thank you,

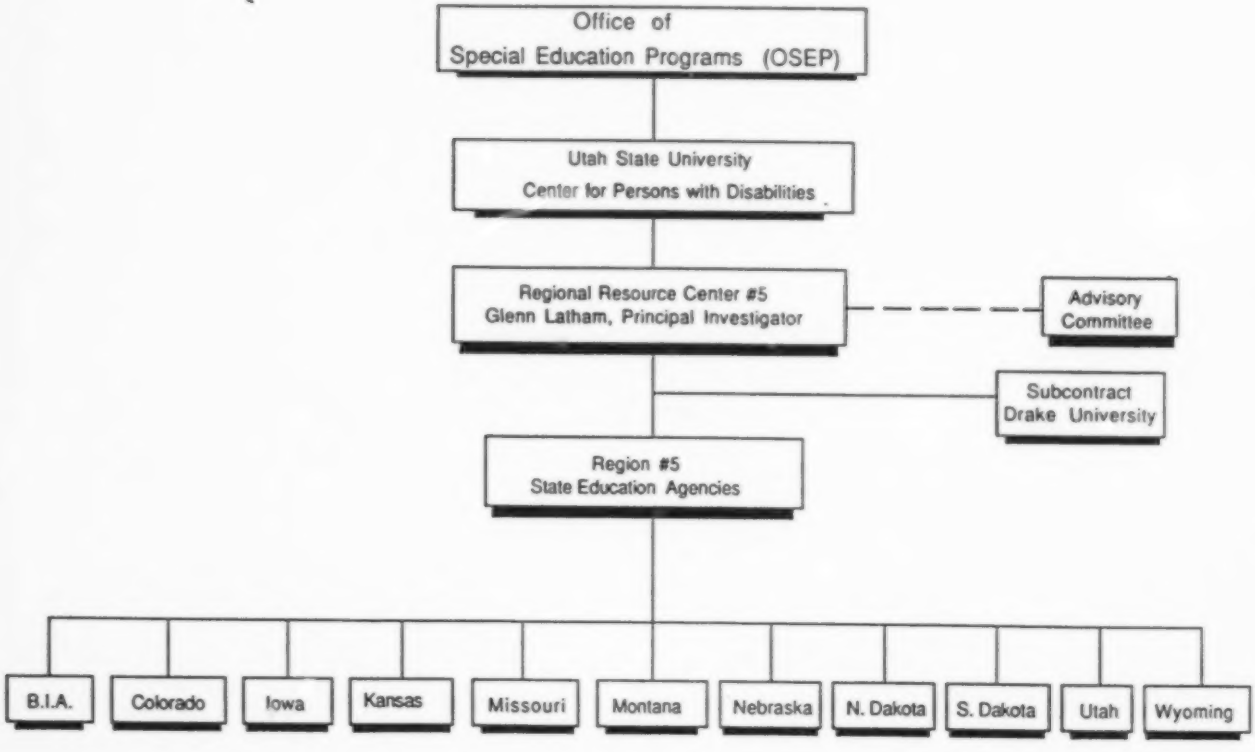
Glenn Latham, Director

INTRODUCTION

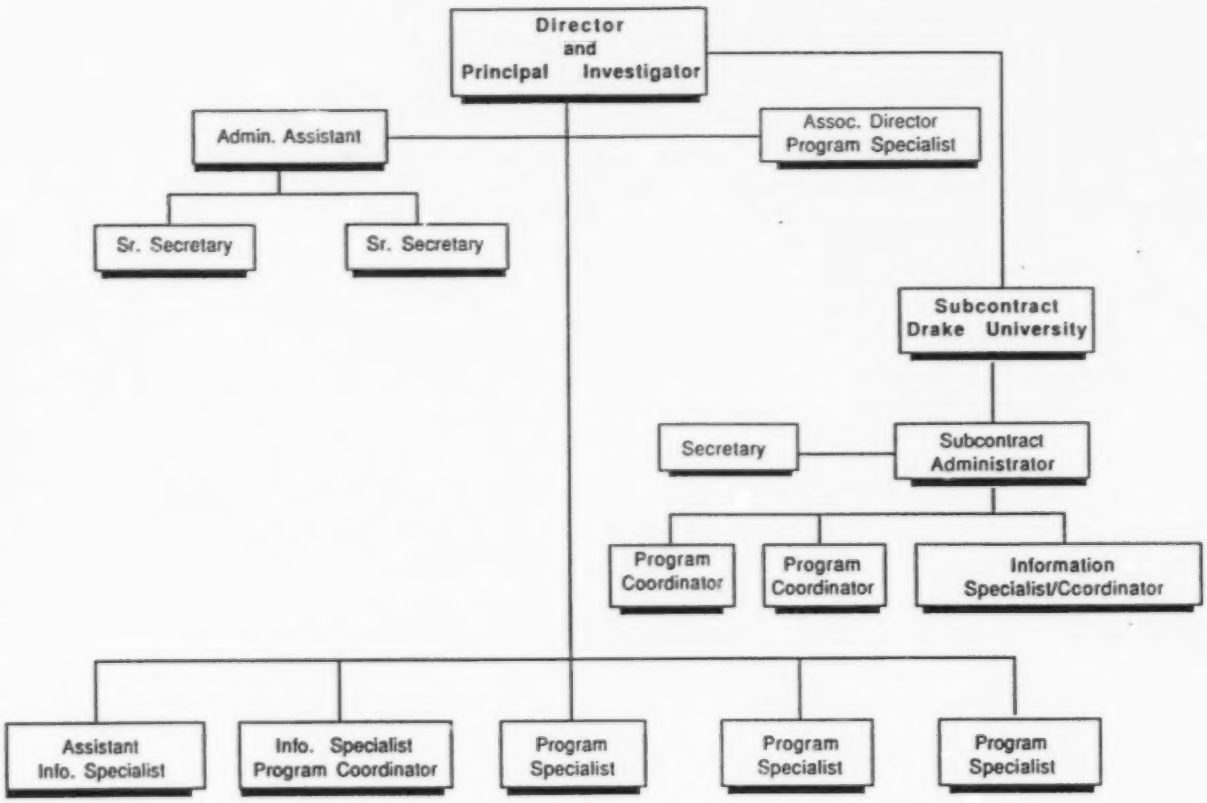
The Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC) is one of six regional resource centers (RRCs) providing services to each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Trust Territories, and the schools of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The MPRRC serves the BIA, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. The eleven state education agencies (SEAs) in the MPRRC region (Region V) are served out of two offices: Utah State University in Logan, Utah, and Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. Utah State University is the prime contractor, and Drake University is a subcontractor.

The demographics of the MPRRC are an important element in determining the way technical assistance is delivered to the states in Region V and the type of services requested. The MPRRC region encompasses 29% of the contiguous United States with 867,267 square miles. The states are large and sparsely populated by comparison to the rest of the country, containing half of the 13 least populated states in the country. The average number of people per square mile in the United States is 70.3—the MPRRC region averages 25.6 per square mile with several states, Montana and Wyoming, having less than six people per square mile. The MPRRC region also contains many of the least racially diverse states in the union—eight of the nineteen least diverse states.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MPRRC



MPRRC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



GOALS AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED

The purpose of the RRC program is to provide Federal support for a variety of activities designed to assist State and local entities in providing early intervention, special education and related services for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families. Activities include technical assistance, training and consultation, as described in CFDA 84.028.

During the cooperative agreement just completed the MPRRC:

1) Provided consultation, technical assistance, and training, as requested, to State educational agencies, and through such agencies to local educational agencies and to other appropriate public agencies who provide special education, related services, and early intervention;

2) Identified and addressed persistent problems in providing quality educational or early intervention services for students with disabilities;

3) Addressed new and emerging issues, such as:

   a. meeting the needs of a diverse group of students with disabilities including, but not limited to, minorities and students with special health care needs;

   b. the retention and recruitment of special education personnel;

   c. improving outcomes for students with disabilities as they make the transition from school to the work place, i.e., employment, independent living;

4) Networked with other RRCs, technical assistance providers, clearinghouses, and dissemination projects regarding sound educational practices;

5) Conducted need assessments and developed technical assistance activity plans in conjunction with appropriate Federal officials and State educational agency officials in each State in Region V.

These goals were met within the framework of four (4) major tasks:

Task 1: Project Management and Support Services - This included hiring and training new staff members, regular staff meetings, interacting with university officials and staff, arranging for office space and equipment, maintaining and managing the facilities and overall budget management.

Task 2: Assistance to States - Needs were identified, technical assistance activities were negotiated and services delivered. Technical assistance activities were evaluated for effect and impact and reported to OSEP on a quarterly basis. Results of these activities are described in the section on Accomplishments and Impact.

Task 3: Advisory Committee - The MPRRC Advisory Committee consisted of the SEA Directors in Region V and parent representatives from each state and the BIA. Two Advisory Committee Meetings were held (one per year). During each meeting issues common to the MPRRC states were highlighted and information was provided, technical assistance activities were discussed and new products displayed.

Task 4: Cross-Regional Collaboration and Sharing - MPRRC staff responded to information requests from other RRCs as described in the section on Information Dissemination and Products; cooperated in the delivery of multi-regional technical assistance, participated in meetings such as the annual TA and Dissemination Meeting of OSEP projects and the OSEP Leadership Meetings, as well as supporting meetings of other OSEP Projects such as TAPP and NECTAS. Staff participated in the annual RRCs' Directors' meetings and monthly Directors' teleconferences. Meetings and teleconferences with other RRC staff were also conducted under this task.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND IMPACT

MPRRC technical assistance activities (TAAs) covered a wide range of issues. Since technical assistance was provided at the request of the SEA directors and their staff, the TAAs reflect the topical areas of need or interest shown by the states in the MPRRC region. Of the 188 TAAs originally negotiated with the SEAs, 87% were completed. The other 13% were cancelled at the request of SEAs because of changing priorities or they were merged with other activities. The following are descriptions of significant accomplishments and evidence of impact resulting from technical assistance delivered from June, 1991 through May, 1993.

CSPD

* The MPRRC and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) CSPD Committee collaborated to provide assistance in a CSPD strategic planning process for all eleven SEAs in the MPRRC region. Strategic plans were developed in many SEAs to address the new CSPD requirements under IDEA.

* A statewide inservice needs assessment survey was conducted by MPRRC staff for the states of Wyoming, Montana and the BIA. The results of each survey gave direction to LEA and SEA staff regarding future inservice training.

* MPRRC staff attended monthly or quarterly meetings of the CSPD councils in Utah, Montana and the BIA. Best practice information was disseminated at each meeting to be distributed at the school building level.

* Because the shortage of certified teachers and therapists in the field of Special Education has reached crisis level, especially in rural areas, the MPRRC was asked for assistance from several states to develop training programs for paraprofessionals. Some SEAs are considering properly trained and supervised paraprofessionals as a way to fill the gaps left by teacher/therapist shortages.

  - A CD-ROM program for training paraprofessionals is being piloted by several schools in South Dakota and Utah to determine the relevance and utility of this system. The MPRRC supported this study as a means of assisting these states in their goals of obtaining quality training for paraprofessionals.

  - MPRRC staff developed a survey instrument to determine training needs of paraprofessionals in Utah. The survey indicated skill areas in which training needed to be concentrated. Programs are being developed to address these skill areas effectively.

  - The state of Montana held a conference for paraprofessionals in conjunction with the Montana Education Association meeting in the fall of 1992. MPRRC staff were directly involved by presenting sessions on Behavior Management in the Classroom and Confidentiality.

* An information packet for recruiting educators for BIA schools was designed, written and published by MPRRC staff. This packet was disseminated to BIA schools and agencies for promotional purposes to encourage teachers and potential teachers to consider employment in BIA schools. The packet included information about the structure and mission of the BIA, programs available and benefits of working for the BIA. The packet has generated enough interest that a second printing is anticipated.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

The early childhood specialists in the MPRRC region expressed a need to share experiences and information with their counterparts in other states, particularly those with similar systems.

* A meeting of early childhood specialists from five states within the region was facilitated by the MPRRC to discuss common issues. These states, Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Utah have requested continued opportunities to meet and discuss issues related to training paraprofessionals, community-based programs, and adapting programs to meet multicultural needs.

* Iowa, South Dakota and Nebraska were states within the MPRRC region having a mandate to serve the early childhood population previous to P.L. 99-457. Meetings of the "Birth Mandate States" have been sponsored by RRCs in a Multi-Region TAA. As a result of this activity the states involved had the opportunity to share and discuss solutions to common problems. Pitfalls and successes were shared giving states valuable information for future planning.

IEP

The six OSEP monitoring reports in the MPRRC region during the past two year period cited SEAs for compliance problems with IEPs. LEAs continue to have questions regarding the IEP process. The following TAA's addressed IEP issues:

* The MPRRC developed a video training program intended to be used at the LEA level. Montana, Wyoming, Utah and the BIA adopted this program as their IEP training program.

* Montana, Wyoming and the BIA also received assistance in the development of IEP technical assistance manuals.

* A statewide IEP "trainer of trainers" model was developed in Montana with MPRRC assistance. Over 400 school districts have access to this training.

* All school principals from BIA schools received training from MPRRC staff regarding their obligations in the IEP process.

* An IEP prototype form was developed by MPRRC staff for use in Iowa. Training materials accompanied the form. The form is now being used across most areas of the state. Assistance was also provided the Iowa SEA in a statewide evaluation study of IEPs, including the random selection and study of 125 IEPs. As a result of this assistance numerous training activities at the local and regional levels have occurred.

* A statewide IEP form was developed in South Dakota with the assistance of MPRRC staff. Assistance was also provided in the initial pilot trainings. The SEA continued the training by region throughout the state. The South Dakota SEA director reports that understanding and quality of IEP's written since the training has improved dramatically. The SEA expects to see continued improvement through regular compliance checks.

LRE

* A study on students served in segregated special education settings was conducted by MPRRC staff for the Iowa SEA. A presentation on LRE and Full Inclusion was also given for SEA staff. The result of this activity was a report titled "Iowa LRE Study." This report was presented to intermediate level directors of special education, SEA special education staff and the state board of education. Since the time of this report two of the segregated facilities have closed. Various activities looking at LRE have, in part been stimulated through this study.

PARENTS

* The Missouri Parent Training Center (MPACT) revised their IEP Support Volunteer Training Manual with the assistance of MPRRC staff. A new format was created and portions were updated resulting in a manual that is more consistent and easy-to-read. MPRRC staff also conducted a Train-the-Trainers session for MPACT Center staff on conducting workshops, improving presentations and dealing with participants. This training session received high marks in the evaluations and will enhance the ability of the MPACT Center staff to train volunteers and improve their presentations to parents of students with disabilities.

* MPRRC staff collected a wide variety of free resources for parents, including information on specific disability issues and on state and local resources, that were disseminated to over 120 parents at the Parents Encouraging Parents conference in Nebraska. Several videotapes were also screened and shown to parents on issues such as ADD, siblings, fathers and transition. MPRRC staff also facilitated several small discussion groups with parents of children with disabilities to discuss their feelings and concerns about their children and issues relevant to special education. Parents indicated this conference was a valuable resource for them and an important opportunity to interact with other parents who have children with disabilities.

* Information was collected and compiled for the North Dakota Bi-monthly Update for the Family Educator Enhancement Team (FEET). MPRRC staff worked with the North Dakota SEA staff to coordinate each issue. SEA staff contributed a North Dakota news section. This information was in a packet that could be filed by parents or professionals for future reference.

* Information from a survey of Parent Information Centers (PTIs) regarding their contact with parents of children with disabilities in BIA schools showed that a few PTIs were serving these parents, but others were not and were eager to find ways to reach them. MPRRC staff provided the PTIs with names and addresses of the BIA Special Education Coordinators in their states and provided contacts and information about the PTIs to the BIA Special Education Coordinators. The Special Education Coordinators agreed to send information furnished by the PTIs in their states regarding parents rights and the special education system home with children in their schools so the parents would know that the PTIs were available as a resource.

* The Utah Parent Center conducted a statewide conference, with the assistance of the MPRRC, to promote collaboration between parents, educators, and other agencies serving children with emotional, behavioral and neurobiological disorders . As a result of this activity, regional plans for improved collaboration have been developed by 7 of 11 Mental Health catchment areas in Utah. The success of this activity has resulted in application by the Parent Center for further funding to continue efforts in developing and/or expanding networks and support to families of children with serious emotional, behavioral, and mental disorders for 1993-95.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

OSEP monitoring reports in the MPRRC region indicate that LEAs are experiencing some difficulty and noncompliance with certain procedural issues. The massive procedural requirements of IDEA, Section 504, FERPA and other regulations have been overwhelming for many LEAs. MPRRC staff provided technical assistance at the SEA and LEA level to clarify obligations of all procedural safeguards.

* Surrogate parent manuals and training programs were developed for Colorado and Wyoming. They are presently being used by LEAs in those states. Many surrogate parents have been trained and assigned to students who have no parent representation.

* The MPRRC assisted in developing extended school year/day guidelines for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Montana. Both SEAs are using the guidelines to help place students for ESY/ESD. The BIA document has been requested by many SEAs outside the region.

* Due Process Hearing Manuals were developed for Wyoming, BIA, and Colorado with the assistance of the MPRRC. Training has also been conducted to ensure properly trained hearing officers.

* MPRRC staff have been working with North Dakota in developing user friendly parent rights materials. LEA staff and parents have assisted with the project.

* Mediation training was conducted in Colorado and Montana. Both SEAs have reported a decrease in requests for Due Process Hearings. Montana reported that twenty of the state's twenty-two disputes which were at the due process hearing stage were resolved in mediation at the close of this current school year.

* A new parent rights brochure was developed for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Numerous requests have been received from the LEAs for more copies.

* MPRRC staff have inserviced over 250 LEA staff regarding confidentiality, especially in relation to the requirements of FERPA.

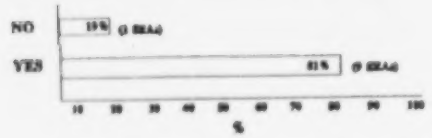
* The MPRRC as assisted four SEAs in developing a model procedural safeguards brochure for their respective LEAs.

* The Bureau of Indian Affairs was assisted in developing a streamlined special education form packet. This has eliminated unnecessary paperwork and increased classroom time for teachers.

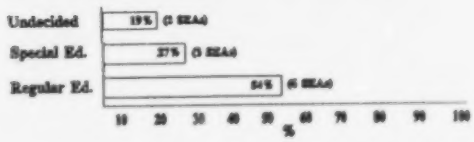
* A survey of all ten MPRRC states and the BIA was conducted to determine if SEAs were implementing Section 504 obligations. Section 504 has been around since 1977, however, many SEAs and LEAs were still not aware of their responsibilities. Many students placed in special education should be served under Section 504 protection. MPRRC staff worked with SEA and LEA staffs to help them become aware of Section 504 responsibilities. Guidelines for educators were developed and Section 504 training conducted.

  The data below indicates a strong impact resulting from MPRRC technical assistance. Three SEAs have developed model Section 504 Educator Guidelines. MPRRC staff have assisted five SEAs in conducting awareness training at the LEA level. This has resulted in the appointment of numerous Section 504 LEA Coordinators. Many local school districts are beginning to screen present special education students for Section 504 services. The end results will be fewer students in special education, a decrease in labeling students and a greater understanding by LEA staff regarding the difference between IDEA and Section 504.

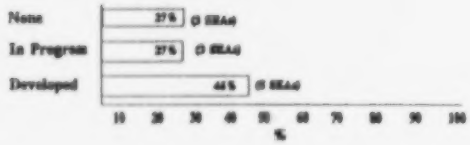
SEA's Requesting Assistance for Section 504



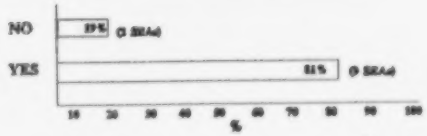
SEA's Moving Section 504 Responsibilities to Regular Education After Technical Assistance



SEA's Developing Educator Guidelines



Number of SEAs Appointing A Section 504 Coordinator After Technical Assistance



PROGRAM EVALUATION

* A statewide training to guide Kansas LEAs in evaluating special education programs was provided by MPRRC staff. As a result of these training activities all Kansas LEAs are including annual program evaluation activities in their local plans. The first report of those evaluation activities completed during the 1992-93 school year are due October, 1993. In addition, the SEA will begin conducting state level program evaluation activities independent of special projects or grants (e.g., inclusion, increase of violence, studies of students exiting special education).

SEA MANAGEMENT

* Direct staff development was provided to SEA staff members from four SEAs (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska). These states identified process skills and content knowledge as issues for ongoing training.

* MPRRC assistance to the Iowa SEA helped them to identify two major new initiatives needed to face emerging challenges in special education. The Iowa Behavioral Initiative will address issues important to meeting the behavioral needs of students throughout the state. The area of staff development will be addressed through a Learning Resource Center that is scheduled to start operation in the Fall of 1993.

* Kansas is looking at the future role of their SEA. MPRRC staff participated in a number of planning activities to look more closely at what this role will be. The MPRRC will be involved in providing technical assistance as this role is defined.

* A study of the current verification criteria used in the areas of learning disabilities, mentally handicapped, speech and language and visually impaired students was completed for the Nebraska SEA by MPRRC staff. As a result of this activity the SEA will be making recommendations to the Nebraska State Board of Education in September, 1993 regarding needed changes in the verification criteria.

SEA MONITORING

Six of the eleven SEA's in the MPRRC region were monitored by the Office of Special Education Programs. Every SEA monitored requested technical assistance from the MPRRC. To assist SEA and LEA staff to bring their programs and documents into compliance with federal special education regulations, MPRRC staff helped develop documents and provided training in areas of IEP, LRE, procedural safeguards, and SEA/LEA monitoring.

* Interviews with SEA staff indicate that the MPRRC was instrumental in assisting with activities and training to overcome corrective actions. An IEP video training program developed by the MPRRC has become the state approved IEP training program in four SEAs in our region and three SEAs outside our region.

* Technical assistance documents for IEPs LRE, procedural safeguards and monitoring developed by the MPRRC are being utilzed at school districts throughout the six states monitored. All documents were developed by a "stakeholders approach," utilizing teachers, related service staff, paraprofessionals, parents and SEA staff. This approach resulted in documents that were pragmatic and user friendly.

* Another positive impact has been the move by three SEAs to begin monitoring for student and program outcomes. Two national monitoring conferences hosted by all the RRC's addressed this issue head on.

* The Bureau of Indian Affairs in collaboration with the MPRRC has conducted two bureauwide program evaluations that have sampled consumers of special education, including parents, students, teachers, school board members and employers of students with disabilities. The results have lead to program improvements.

* The MPRRC also assisted the BIA develop a new monitoring system that included consistent procedures and documents. LEA staff have been positive in their comments regarding the new system.

* The MPRRC facilitated the collaboration of Kansas and Utah in sharing the best features of their monitoring systems. SEA staff have participated in LEA monitorings and used information and ideas to improve their monitoring process.

* A statewide survey at the LEA level was conducted by MPRRC staff for the Nebraska SEA regarding the states monitoring process. As a result of the information from the survey the Nebraska SEA made changes in the way LEAs are monitored and now provides more technical assistance to LEAs in areas of corrective action.

SCHOOL REFORM

School restructuring was a major issue in the MPRRC region. Five states, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming, took part in statewide school restructuring efforts involving training teachers and administrators and developing pilot sites for exemplary practices. Pilot sites focused on training teachers in strategies to promote successful inclusion of students with disabilities into the regular classroom. The MPRRC developed a trainer of trainers program manual and conducted a training for representatives from all five states.

* Outcome-Based Education and Mastery Learning training was conducted by MPRRC staff throughout Colorado. One pilot site was identified to study the outcome of these strategies. At present teacher inquiry and observation have provided positive feedback as to the success of this program. This school has a large at risk and culturally diverse population. They have successfully included all students with disabilities in the regular classrooms and still maintained high standardized test scores.

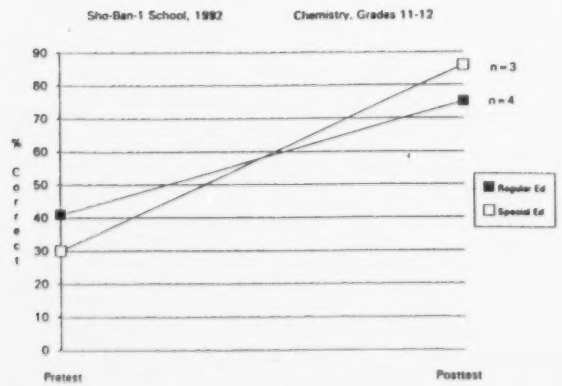
* South Dakota has been very involved with Outcome-Based Education and Mastery Learning for several years with assistance from the MPRRC. Data is still being collected on the student outcomes for these programs, however, preliminary observation and inquiry are positive for both. Pilot sites have been identified to study the use of Mastery Learning for inclusion in combination with Cooperative Learning and Cooperative Teaching. The state is strongly committed to this project and has created a state wide committee to plan and fund joint efforts throughout the state. The state's Shared Responsibility Project has taken the lead on this project and will continue to study and replicate successful projects.

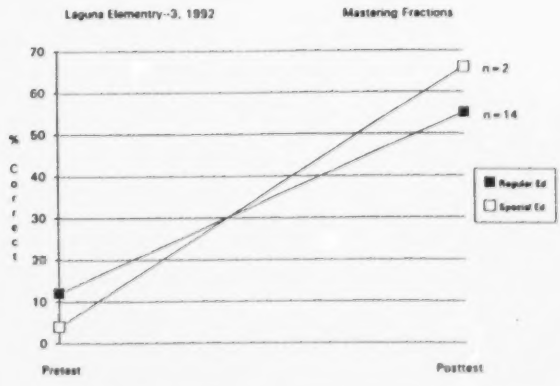
* Training in Mastery Learning has been provided by MPRRC staff throughout Utah with continued success in areas with strong administrative support. The Utah Learning Resource Center has provided expertise and support and eventually will do all the training.

* Limited training in Mastery Learning has taken place throughout the state of Wyoming, however six LEA and SEA staff participated in the Training of Trainers workshop provided by the MPRRC. Plans for future involvement include training at the statewide Summer Institute and establishing pilot sites for the study of inclusion programs.

* The MPRRC collaborated with the Systems Impact Videodisc Programs, a project at Utah State University, to provide science and math programs using videodisc technology in ten classrooms in six BIA schools. Pretests and posttests were administered before and after the implementation of each program. In addition, a Teacher Questionnaire was completed by each nine of the ten teachers. Complete results from this project are available from the MPRRC. The teachers felt very strongly that the videodisc technology made it easier to teach math or science concepts, and that the programs allowed them to spend more individual time with students who are having problems.

  In all classes, students made substantial gains from the pretest to the posttest. Additionally, in every case, the special education students learned at approximately the same rate as the regular education students. In two classrooms the special education students actually did better on the posttest than did regular education students. See below. On two reservations outstanding student achievement has been recognized statewide and nationally. These results are particularly dramatic because Indian student performance in math and science has been a persisting problem in Indian education, where student achievement scores have traditionally been well below the national averages.





SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Activities in the area of Special Populations covered a wide range of disabilities. They included development of guidelines for serving students with various disabilities, conferences for teachers and administrators about how to work with a particular population, linking agencies and services to collaborate on providing education and health services, and providing information regarding legal and educational issues. Over 150 paraprofessionals have been trained by MPRRC staff on their responsibilities in serving special populations.

Attention Deficit Disorder

* Assistance was provided the Iowa SEA in the area of attention deficit disorders. Several products resulted from this activity. The "Attention Deficit Disorder Study Group: Final Report" was presented to the State Board of Education and widely distributed in the state. This led to a position paper developed by the Department of Education and distributed to all LEAs in the state. The MPRRC also assisted in the preparation of an ADD information packet that was sent to all LEAs in the state.

* Through a technical assistance activity MPRRC staff provided assistance to the Nebraska SEA on the topics of attention deficit disorders and Section 504. MPRRC staff coordinated a meeting involving identified stakeholders from around the state who arrived at priorities and identified key activities in which the SEA should engage in planning for the needs of students with Attention Deficit Disorder and Section 504.

* As a result of a technical assistance activity in Colorado a monograph was written by MPRRC staff on the topic of school based identification of students with ADD that has been submitted to the Attention Deficit Disorders Association for publication.

Autism

* MPRRC staff assisted the Iowa SEA in the continued development of the Autism Regional Resource Centers in Iowa. These centers provide staff development activities. More recent MPRRC work has included the Homestead project that will be offering both training and residential services for young adults with autism.

Behavioral Disorders

* Assistance was provided by MPRRC staff to the Bureau of Indian Affairs resulting in the BIA moving forward with a plan involving the BIA and Indian Health Services to create a therapeutic school model to be first piloted in the off campus boarding schools under the auspices of the Bureau. It is intended that this will serve as a model for other programs operated by the Bureau.

* MPRRC staff were involved in initiating the Iowa Behavioral Initiative which will be a multi-year project aimed at meeting the behavioral needs of students in Iowa. This project will most likely include staff development activities, demonstration sites, curriculum development and ongoing data collection.

* As a result of MPRRC technical assistance in the area of behavioral disorders in Nebraska the awareness level of the needs of students with behavioral disorders was increased across various constituencies within the state. Perhaps one of the most important vehicles for doing so was the use of focus groups to elicit ideas regarding current practices with students with behavioral disorders and what is needed to improve services for this population. A report summarizing the results of these focus groups is being distributed throughout the state and has been sent to such policy groups as the Special Education Advisory Council.

* Assistance in South Dakota was provided by MPRRC staff to one large LEA and state agencies on the topic of behavioral disorders. Perhaps the most important outcome of this activity is the development of a multiagency model for the identification of students with significant behavioral difficulties and the first draft of an outline for describing interventions for such students. This was completed by a group of stakeholders convened by the SEA Special Education Division and the Department of Mental Health and facilitated by the MPRRC.

* MPRRC staff facilitated SEA and national discussions on issues relevant to serving students with behavioral disorders. As a result of this activity the Missouri SEA decided to prepare and disseminate a document on best practice for programs/services for SED students.

* The planning and facilitation of the annual Midwest Symposium for Leadersip in Behavior Disorders in Kansas City was provided by MPRRC staff. As a result of this regional conference, a broad base of professionals from 28 states and Canada (largest representation from Kansas, Iowa, Missouri and Nebraska) were provided a forum for networking, sharing, and gaining information on best practices for serving students with serious emotional disturbance.

* A state resource document for LEA administrators and program planners responsible for developing comprehensive services for students experiencing behavioral difficulties was developed by MPRRC staff. As a result of this activity a comprehensive program guide is being written and reviewed by stakeholders for Fall 1993 dissemination. Coordinated training activities will be developed for the 1993-94 school year. If program recommendations are implemented as recommended, LEAs will increase their capacities to work effectively with families and community agencies on behalf of all students experiencing social, emotional or behavioral difficulties.

Deaf/Blind

* The MPRRC helped facilitate the development of a comprehensive plan to serve the deaf and blind population in Montana. All deaf and/or blind students will benefit from this program.

Special Health Care Needs

* MPRRC technical assistance lead to major changes in Montana's Nurse Practice Act allowing for delegation of certain health care procedures.

* In Utah and Montana, the MPRRC assisted in the development of Guidelines for Serving Students with Special Health Care Needs. The guidelines were disseminated to over 450 school districts and are presently being utilized to provide improved programs at the school level.

* The MPRRC has provided numerous trainings to both SEA and LEA staff regarding the differences of serving special health care students under IDEA and/or Section 504.

* Inservice training has been provided by MPRRC staff in the area of special health care needs to over 850 LEA staff and teachers.

* The MPRRC served as a catalyst to begin the development of educator guidelines to serve students with special health care needs in North Dakota. A major presentation was made to the task force, along with best practice materials.

* MPRRC staff made over ten presentations to preservice teacher training programs on techniques and issues in serving special populations. This should have future positive consequences for students with health care concerns.

Traumatic Brain Injury

* The MPRRC assisted Utah in developing one of the first guidelines for serving students with Traumatic Brain Injury. Over 300 LEA staff were trained.

TRANSITION

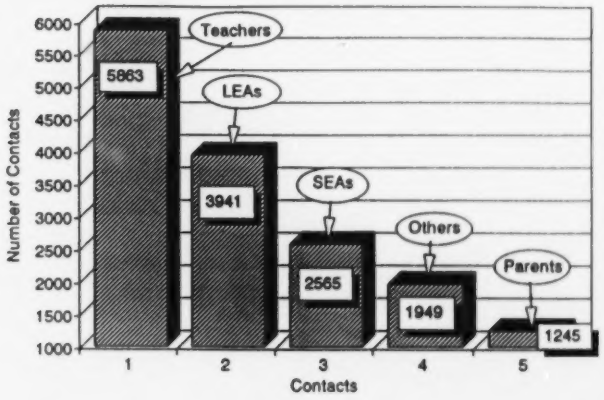
* Assistance was provided to the Montana SEA in reviewing and revising current Transition Guidelines. MPRRC staff also assisted in forming a State Advisory Council to address transition activities and direct training for teachers. The MPRRC compiled a Transition Survival Kit which helps LEA's understand compliance issues and how to develop transition programs for students which meet the intent and letter of the law. The Transition Survival Kit and training were provided to 150 school districts, all Special Education Cooperative Directors, and all LEA Special Education Directors.

* SEA transition specialists in the MPRRC region expressed an interest in sharing activities, efforts, concerns and strategies in the area of transition from school to work. This was accomplished through a series of teleconferences around critical topics and issues in conjuction with the GLARRC Region states. Information and materials were provided to all SEA's and some state agencies on transition services, secondary education and post secondary education for students with disabilities. The information was provided in a timely manner which allowed SEAs the opportunity to anticipate, discuss with other colleagues and plan for issues that were emerging nationally.

  Another result of this cooperative effort to plan, host and coordinate this activity by the MPRRC and GLARRC was the effective and cost efficient manner in which information and materials were shared between SEAs and national leaders on the topic areas. While there is no quantifiable data regarding specific outcomes in states from this activity, every state in both the MPRRC and GLARRC Regions felt this activity to be very beneficial and appreciated the opportunity to interact and share information, issues, concerns and potential solutions with colleagues across regions and states.

* MPRRC staff developed the manual "Developing and Writing Transition Services Within the IEP Process." This manual has been used to train between five and ten thousand educators on how to incorporate transition services and the new transition requirements within the IEP process for students with disabilities. It is anticipated that as a result of this information and training, IEPs have been developed for thousands of youth that respond to needed transition services with a systematic and coordinated approach for addressing those needs. Subsequent training manuals and modules have been developed for Iowa and Nebraska based upon the original manual. These subsequent manuals and modules will be used to further train educators, parents, and other professionals. Inquiries were also made by a number of SEAs about the materials in the original manual indicating the information and approaches taken may be used in policy changes on transition delivery in those states. It is estimated that over 10,000 copies of the manual have been made and disseminated across the nation.

CONTACTS BY POPULATION
Mountain Plains RRC

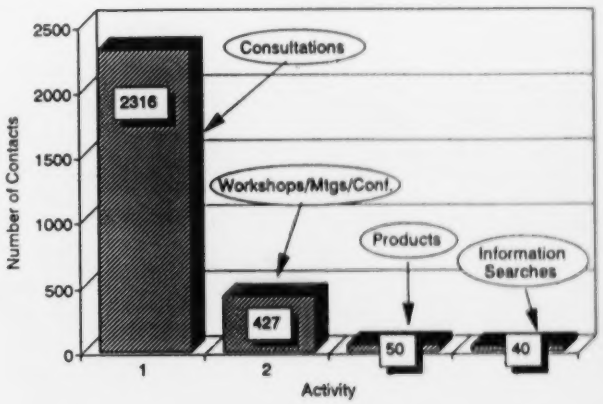


OTHERS includes representatives from:

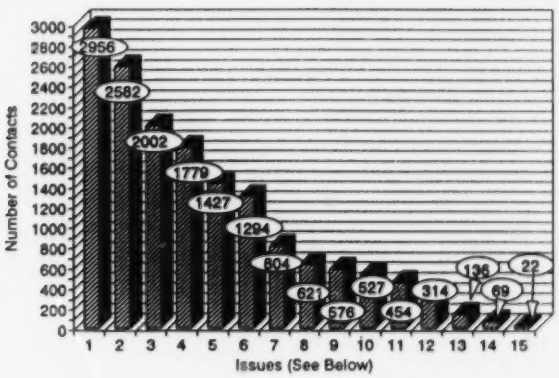
Related Services	436
Inst. of Higher Ed	329
Support Staff	124
Legal Staff	123
Vocational Rehabilitation	118
Consultants	109
Health Services	85
Mental Health	82
Advocacy Groups	60
Other RRCs	55
State Institutions	32
OSEP & Federal Projects	30
State Boards of Education	28
Private Organizations	26
Social Services	25

CEC	20
Transition Projects	15
Concerned Citizens	11
Legislators	7
Juvenile Justice	6
Bureau for the Blind	5
DD Councils	4
Adult Education	3
OCR	3
Medical Doctors	2
State Advisory Committees	2
Youth Services	2
Consumers	1

TYPES OF CONTACTS
Mountain Plains RRC



CONTACTS BY DESCRIPTOR
Mountain Plains RRC

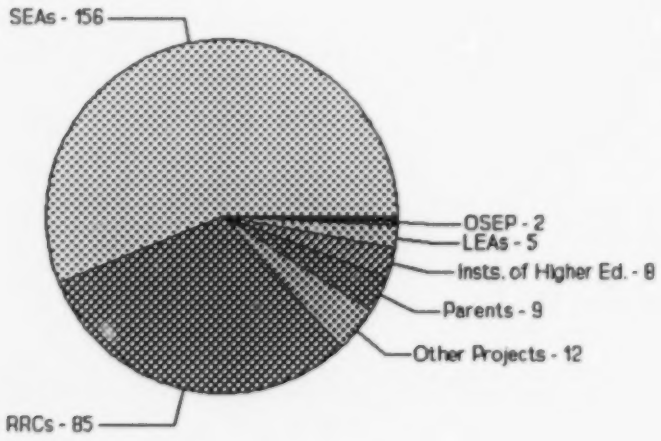


1 IEP
2 Special Populations
3 SEA Management
4 Transition
5 School Reform
6 CSPD
7 Technology
8 SEA Monitoring
9 Parents
10 LRE
11 Procedural Safeguards
12 Personnel Development
13 Early Childhood
14 Program Evalaluation
15 Related Services

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND PRODUCTS

From June 1, 1991 to May 31, 1993 the MPRRC Information Services responded to a total of 277 information requests, an average of 11.5 per month. The following chart indicates who made the requests. Requests from the SEAs include requests by staff members for SEAs and requests from SEA staff members directly. It is assumed that information provided the SEAs is passed on to LEAs in various ways. "Other Projects" includes attorneys, publishers, consultants, and other federal and state projects.

Requests for Information



The most frequestly requested topics were:

Traumatic Brain Injury
Attention Deficit Disorder
Seriously Emotionally Disturbed
Paraprofessionals
Section 504
Medically Fragile (Special Health Care Needs)
Adaptive Physical Education
Assessment
Extended School Year
Learning Disabilities
Transition

MPRRC PRODUCTS - JUNE 1, 1991 - MAY 31, 1993

Audio/visual

* Managing the Classroom Environment - video tapes and manuals
* Colorado Parent Belief Statement video
* Public Service Announcements - video and audio tapes for television and radio use by the South Dakota Parent Connection
* Developing Effective Individualized Education Plans - video tapes and manuals

Grant Proposals

* Caring and Teaching School Communities - Iowa SEA grant proposal

Guidelines

* Montana Guidelines to Serve Students with Special Health Care Needs
* Utah Guidelines and Procedures for Students with Special Health Care Needs
* Montana Guidelines for Extended School Year/Day Services
* Utah Section 504 Guidelines for Educators
* Extended School Year Guidelines - policy document for BIA
* Utah Guidelines for Serving Students with Traumatic Brain Injury

Information Packages

* Montana's LEA Transition Survival Kit - information package
* New Requirements under IDEA - information bulletin
* Special Education Funding Models - information package
* Iowa IEP Resource Document
* North Dakota Bi-monthly information packet
* Bi-monthly Update - information packet for MPRRC Advisory Committee Parent Representatives

Newsletters

* Nebraska Sharing Connection Newsletter - parent newsletter

Reports

* Final Report for the Nebraska BD Project
* An evaluation report on student achievement gains, attitudes and perceptions of users of the Science and Math Videodisc Instructional Programs being used in BIA school sites
* South Dakota Department of Education Data Report and Summary Report - 1990-91
* Report of the Nebraska evaluation of their program standards review system (monitoring system)
* Utah Special Education Demographic Report
* Iowa Recruitment and Retention Task Force Report
* Montana Task Force on Outreach Services for Deaf-Blind Students Project Report
* Final Report of the Iowa ADD Study Group

Strategic Plans/Studies

* Project Re-entry: A study of the potential use of retired persons in special education - revised and updated
* Nebraska Action Plan in Behavior Disorders
* Iowa LRE Study

Synthesis and Analysis Papers

* Analysis of BIA Program Evaluation
* Special Education and School Reform - synthesis and analysis paper

Training Manuals

* Colorado Parents Encouraging Parent Resource Manual
* Kansas Section 504 Manual
* Developing and Writing Transition Services within the IEP Process manual
* Writing Effective Grants - BIA training manual
* Wyoming Due Process Hearing Offers Training Manual addressing new information from IDEA & Section 504
* BIA Monitoring and Program Compliance - manual
* Mastery Learning Training Package
* Special Education Form Packet for BIA schools
* Wyoming Surrogate Parent Training Manual
* Iowa IEP Participants Manual
* Montana Surrogate Parent Training Manual - with the Montana Parent Center